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On weekends, musicians teach people how to play drums and other musical instruments, attracting more customers to his cafe.

The No. 3 Wangjiangyi rest area, known as “Encounter,” has become a cultural beacon since 2018, hosting media interviews and cultural talks against the backdrop of the city's skyline.

“Our interviews draw curious looks from people outside, peering through the windows,” said Chen Jue, chairman of the Pudong Xinjiayuan Community Governance Center, a nonprofit social organization.

“The space and interview style here create a special sense of closeness.”

Shanghai expats and visitors have taken to social media to express their admiration for the riverside wayside stations in Shanghai.

“Shanghai's river stations are more than just rest stops. They're perfect for anyone looking to escape the city's bustle. Love the blend of nature and modernity here,” one expat tweeted.

Another shared a view on Instagram: “Found this gem of a spot by Suzhou Creek. The perfect mix of tranquility and city vibes.”

There are similar public way stations overseas, like one in Thuringia, Germany, which combines facilities for motorists with a nearby bronze-age burial mound exhibition.

In California, the Riverside Transit Agency offers service stops that include free Wi-Fi on some routes and partnerships with educational institutions for student transit.

In comparison with similar developments globally, Shanghai's stations are notable for their multifunctional nature and esthetic integration. They preserve the cultural heritage of the city while offering modern amenities, according to the city's office in charge of the river



Wangjiangyi stations along the east bank of Huangpu River in Pudong resemble wooden pavilions.

and creek's development.

Jiang Zehao, with his backpack as a makeshift pillow, sleeps inside the 24/7 Suheyi station along Suzhou Creek.

“I just came to Shanghai from my hometown, and I was looking for a job,” Jiang said. “Sleeping here is a way to save money. This place is nice, and it feels safe to sleep here.”

Fortunately, he has found a job that provides food and accommodation so he said he will be bidding his temporary “bedroom” a fond farewell.

In early March, a committee was established to advise on the development of these riverside areas in Shanghai. Its 17 members include experts from fields such as urban planning, economics and tourism development.

They are helping plan the next steps of development, which include showcasing the stories of bridges over Suzhou Creek, designing themed river routes for families and incorporating historical elements and urban archeology in existing stations, according to the office.

“We are also looking to make these stations digitally connected hubs,” said an official from the office.



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A girl reads a book at a riverside rest stop in Yangpu District.